(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken to ensure the livelihood of rural artisans especially women workers and to develop their skill to secure alternative jobs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The bigger players in the textile industries are the powerlooms and mills sector. The rural textile industries, which consist mainly handloom sector, have been facing stiff competition from powerloom and mill sectors in terms of technology, production capacity and price even after phasing out of quota system.

(c) and (d) The Office of the Development Commissioner for Handlooms has already been implementing the following develc pmental and skill upgradation schemes and programmes to promote the handloom textile industry:—

(i) Deen Dayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana.

(ii) Handloom Export Scheme.

(iii) Marketing Promotion Programme.

(iv) Mill Gate Price Scheme.

(v) Integrated Handloom Training Programme.

(vi) Design Development & Training Programme.

Besides, the Office of the Development Commissioner for Handlooms has also introduced some new Schemes/programmes, *viz.*, Integrated Handloom Cluster Development Scheme, Handloom Mark, Opening up of 273 new Yarn Depots and Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme for the Handloom Sector.

(e) As per Handloom Census 1995-96, out of 65 lakh handloom weavers in the country, about 60% are women weavers. The benefits under the above schemes, which are developmental and skill upgradation schemes, percolates down to the handloom weavers including women weavers.

MSP to cotton growers

98. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) The total production of cotton in the country during the last three years;

(b) The total export/import of cotton during last three years;

(c) Whether the cotton growers are not getting Minimum Support Price;

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government in this regard;

(e) Whether the Cotton Corporation of India is likely to procure cotton directly from the growers and pay MSP; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) Total production of cotton in the country during last three years is as under:

Cotton Season (Oct.-Sept.)	Production (in lakh bales of 170 kgs)
2003-04	177
2004-05	243
2005-06	244
2006-07 (estimated)	270

(b) Total export/import of cotton during last three years is as under:

(figures in tonnes)

Year	Export	Import
2003-04	179612	252899
2004-05	86635	192178
2005-06 (Prov.)	595881	98240

Source: DGCIS, Kolkata

(c) and (d) In order to ensure remunerative prices to the cotton growers and avoid distress sales, the Cotton Corporation of India (CCI), in the wake of prevailing kapas prices touching the MSP level, has been purchasing the entire quantity of Fair Average Quality (FAQ) grade kapas offered to it at Agriculture Produce Marketing Committees (APMC) market yards without any quantitative limit. Further, to help the cotton farmers,

the CCI has also been pruchasing the kapas three stages below FAQ grade.

(e) and (f) Currently the market prices are above the MSP level. If the market prices fall below the MSP, the CCI is mandated to procure cotton at MSP levels from the growers.

Modernisation of textile units in the country

99. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plan to modernize its textile units in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of funds allotted for the purpose; and

(d) the progress made so far in the country in this respect?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) National Textile Corporation (NTC) has drawn a plan to modernize 22 of its mills by itself in accordance with the Revival Scheme approved by the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR), as per the list is given at Statement (*See* below). The Rehabilitation Scheme of The British India Corporation Ltd. (BIC) sanctioned by BIFR in 2002 envisaged modernization of its mills involving an expenditure of Rs. 46.58 crores.

(c) The Rehabilitation Scheme for NTC sanctioned in 2002 by the BIFR entailed sacrifices from the Union Government in the form of conversion of outstanding loans of Rs. 2689.79 crores into equity and write off of the entire interest on loan given to the 8 subsidaries of NTC upto 31.3.2001, revival of 44 viable mills at a cost of Rs. 661.81 crores, one time settlement with secured creditors, to provide wage support as a loan, etc. Similarly, the BIFR sanctioned Rehabilitation Scheme in 2002 for BIC Ltd. which entailed assistance of Rs. 37 crores as interest free unsecured loan, grant of Rs. 49 crores, waiver of interest on the unsecured loans, conversion of outstanding unsecured loan into equity to provide wage support as a loan, etc. The funds for modernization of NTC mills are to be generated by sale